

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Original) A platter for a weighing scale, comprising:

a base;

a plurality of legs extending downwardly from the base; and

at least one hinged member mounted on the base and movable between a first position in which the hinged member is substantially horizontal and a second position in which the hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

2. (Original) The platter according to claim 1, wherein the at least one hinged member includes a first hinged member mounted to a first edge of the base and a second hinged member mounted to a second edge of the base that is opposite to the first edge, the first hinged member being movable between a first member first position in which the first hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the second edge of the base and a first member second position in which the first hinged member extends upwardly from the base, the second hinged member being movable between a second member first position in which the second hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the first edge of the base and a second member second position in which the second hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

3. (Original) The platter according to claim 2, wherein:

the first hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and a second side that faces downward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position;

the second hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position and a second side that faces downward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position;

the respective first sides of the first and second hinged members define a surface for supporting a parcel to be weighed by the weighing scale when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and the second hinged member is in the second member first position; and

an upper surface of the base, the second side of the first hinged member and the second side of the second hinged member define a cradle for holding a plurality of mailpieces to be weighed by the weighing scale, when the first hinged member is in the first member second position and the second hinged member is in the second member second position.

4. (Original) A platter for a weighing scale, comprising:

a base having a first edge and a second edge that is opposite to the first edge;

a plurality of legs extending downwardly from the base;

a first hinged member mounted to the first edge of the base, the first hinged member being movable between a first member first position in which the first hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the second edge of the base and a first member second position in which the first hinged member extends upwardly from the base; and

a second hinged member mounted to the second edge of the base, the second hinged member being movable between a second member first position in which the second hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the first edge of the base and a second member second position in which the second hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

5. (Original) The platter according to claim 4, wherein:

the first hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and a second side that faces downward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position;

the second hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position and a second side that faces downward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position;

the respective first sides of the first and second hinged members define a surface for supporting a parcel to be weighed by the weighing scale when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and the second hinged member is in the second member first position; and

an upper surface of the base, the second side of the first hinged member and the second side of the second hinged member define a cradle for holding a plurality of mailpieces to be differentially weighed by the weighing scale, when the first hinged member is in the first member second position and the second hinged member is in the second member second position.

6. (Original) A weighing scale, comprising:

a load cell;

a platter for supporting at least one mailpiece to be weighed by the weighing scale; and

means for mounting the platter on the load cell;

wherein the platter comprises:

a base; and

at least one hinged member mounted on the base and movable between a first position in which the hinged member is substantially horizontal and a second position in which the hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

7. (Original) The weighing scale according to claim 6, wherein the at least one hinged member includes a first hinged member mounted to a first edge of the base and a second hinged member mounted to a second edge of the base that is opposite to the first edge, the first hinged member being movable between a first member first position in which the first hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the second edge of the base and a first member second position in which the first hinged member extends upwardly from the base, the second hinged member being movable between a second member first position in

which the second hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the first edge of the base and a second member second position in which the second hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

8. (Original) The weighing scale according to claim 7, wherein:

the first hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and a second side that faces downward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position;

the second hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position and a second side that faces downward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position;

the respective first sides of the first and second hinged members define a surface for supporting a parcel to be weighed by the weighing scale when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and the second hinged member is in the second member first position; and

an upper surface of the base, the second side of the first hinged member, and the second side of the second hinged member define a cradle for holding a plurality of mailpieces to be differentially weighed by the weighing scale, when the first hinged member is in the first member second position and the second hinged member is in the second member second position.

9. (Original) A weighing scale, comprising:

a load cell;

a platter for supporting at least one mailpiece to be weighed by the weighing scale; and

means for mounting the platter on the load cell;

wherein the platter comprises:

a base having a first edge and a second edge that is opposite to the first edge;

a first hinged member mounted to the first edge of the base, the first hinged member being movable between a first member first position in which the first hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the second edge of the base and a first member second position in which the first hinged member extends upwardly from the base; and

a second hinged member mounted to the second edge of the base, the second hinged member being movable between a second member first position in which the second hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the first edge of the base and a second member second position in which the second hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

10. (Original) The weighing scale according to claim 9, wherein:

the first hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and a second side that faces downward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position;

the second hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position and a second side that faces downward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position;

the respective first sides of the first and second hinged members define a surface for supporting a parcel to be weighed by the weighing scale when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and the second hinged member is in the second member first position; and

an upper surface of the base, the second side of the first hinged member and the second side of the second hinged member define a cradle for holding a plurality of mailpieces to be differentially weighed by the weighing scale, when the first hinged member is in the first member second position and the second hinged member is in the second member second position.

11. (New) A mailing machine comprising:

a control unit for controlling operation of the mailing machine, the control unit adapted to operate the mailing machine at least in a differential weighing mode; and

a scale coupled to the control unit, the scale including a platter for supporting at least one mail piece for weighing, the platter further comprising:

a base; and

at least one hinged member mounted on the base and movable between a first position in which the hinged member is substantially horizontal and a second position in which the hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

12. (New) The mailing machine according to claim 11, wherein the at least one hinged member includes a first hinged member mounted to a first edge of the base and a second hinged member mounted to a second edge of the base that is opposite to the first edge, the first hinged member being movable between a first member first position in which the first hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the second edge of the base and a first member second position in which the first hinged member extends upwardly from the base, the second hinged member being movable between a second member first position in which the second hinged member extends substantially horizontally toward the first edge of the base and a second member second position in which the second hinged member extends upwardly from the base.

13. (New) The mailing machine according to claim 12, wherein:

the first hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and a second side that faces downward when the first hinged member is in the first member first position;

the second hinged member includes a first side that faces upward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position and a second side that faces downward when the second hinged member is in the second member first position;

the respective first sides of the first and second hinged members define a surface for supporting an item to be weighed by the weighing scale when the first hinged member is in the first member first position and the second hinged member is in the second member first position; and

an upper surface of the base, the second side of the first hinged member and the second side of the second hinged member define a cradle when the first hinged member is in the first member second position and the second hinged member is in the second member second position, the cradle for holding a plurality of mail pieces to be weighed when the mailing machine is in the differential weighing mode.

14. (New) The mailing machine according to claim 11, further comprising:

a base unit,

wherein the control unit and scale are mounted on the base unit.

15. (New) A method of operating a mailing machine comprising:

placing the mailing machine in a differential weighing mode;

configuring a weighing platter of the mailing machine to receive a plurality of mail pieces by moving a first hinged member of the weighing platter from a first position in which the first hinged member is substantially horizontal with respect to a base of the weighing platter to a second position in which the first hinged member extends upwardly from the base and by moving a second hinged member of the weighing platter from a first position in which the second hinged member is substantially horizontal with respect to the base of the weighing platter to a second position in which the second hinged member is extends upwardly from the base, the first hinged member, second hinged member and base thereby forming a cradle; and

placing the plurality of mail pieces in the cradle.

16. (New) The method according to claim 15, further comprising:

removing a first one of the plurality of mail pieces from the cradle, wherein the mailing machine, in response to the removal of the first one of the plurality of mail pieces being removed, differentially determines the weight of the first one of the plurality of mail pieces; and

feeding the first one of the plurality of mail pieces into the mailing machine.